

THE
OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE :

An early English Poem

ATTRIBUTED TO NICHOLAS DE GUILDFORD,

WITH SOME SHORTER POEMS

FROM THE SAME MANUSCRIPT.

EDITED BY

THOMAS WRIGHT, ESQ. M.A., F.S.A., &c.

CORRESPONDING MEMBER OF THE ROYAL INSTITUTE OF FRANCE.

LONDON.

PRINTED FOR THE PERCY SOCIETY,

BY T. RICHARDS, 100, ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

M.DCCC.XLIH.

THE

OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE :

IN TWO PARTS

ADAPTED TO THE STAGE BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

AND

BY

WILLIAM SHAKESPEARE

AND

LONDON

PRINTED FOR THE TRINITY SOCIETY

BY J. KILGOUR, 25, ST. MARK'S LANE

1850

COUNCIL
OF
The Perry Society.

President.

THE RT. HON. LORD BRAYBROOKE, F.S.A.

THOMAS AMYOT, Esq. F.R.S. TREAS. S.A.

WILLIAM HENRY BLACK, Esq.

WILLIAM CHAPPELL, Esq. F.S.A. *Treasurer.*

J. PAYNE COLLIER, Esq. F.S.A.

T. CROFTON CROKER, Esq. F.S.A., M.R.I.A.

PETER CUNNINGHAM, Esq.

REV. ALEXANDER DYCE.

WILLIAM JERDAN, Esq. F.S.A., M.R.S.L.

CAPTAIN JOHNS, R.M.

T. J. PETTIGREW, Esq. F.R.S., F.S.A.

LEWIS POCOCK, Esq. F.S.A.

E. F. RIMBAULT, Esq. F.S.A. *Secretary.*

WILLIAM SANDYS, Esq. F.S.A.

WILLIAM J. THOMS, Esq. F.S.A.

THOMAS WRIGHT, Esq. M.A., F.S.A.

COPYRIGHT

18

The Society

President

THE DR. JOHN EDWIN WATKINS, F.R.S.

THOMAS SMITH, M.D., F.R.S.

WILLIAM BENTLEY, M.D.

WILLIAM CHAPMAN, M.D., F.R.S.

J. EATON COLLIER, M.D., F.R.S.

T. GORDON COOPER, M.D., F.R.S.

EDWARD DUNSTON, M.D.

DR. ALEXANDER DICK

WILLIAM J. DUNN, M.D., F.R.S.

CAPTAIN JONES, R.N.

T. J. PATTISON, M.D., F.R.S.

EDWARD ROBERTS, M.D., F.R.S.

E. V. SMITH, M.D., F.R.S.

WILLIAM SANDERSON, M.D., F.R.S.

WILLIAM J. THOMAS, M.D., F.R.S.

THOMAS WRIGHT, M.D., F.R.S.

PREFACE.

THE curious poem of *The Owl and the Nightingale* has already been printed by the Roxburghe Club, in 1838, under the title, "The Owl and the Nightingale, a poem of the twelfth century." It is found in two manuscripts, both of the thirteenth century; one in the British Museum, MS. Cotton. Calig. A. IX., from which the present text is printed; the other in the library of Jesus College, Oxford. The date of the composition of this piece is a matter of some doubt. Mr. Stevenson, the editor of the Roxburghe volume, believed that it was written in the reign of Richard I, and that the king Henry, whose death is alluded to at p. 38 of the present edition, was Henry II. On the other hand, Sir Frederick Madden (note on Warton's History of English Poetry, new edition, 1840, vol. i. p. 25), thinks the king alluded to was Henry III, and that our poem was composed early in the reign of Edward I.

I confess that I am inclined to think the king referred to was Henry II. The Cottonian MS.

is the one which contains the earliest copy of Layamon, which is followed by a brief chronicle brought down only to the beginning of the reign of Henry III. These English poems appear to be written in the same, or a contemporary hand, and I have little doubt that the whole MS. was written (perhaps early) in that reign, so that Henry III could not be spoken of as dead. At the same time, it does not appear to me, from a perusal of the passage in which king Henry is mentioned, that it must necessarily have been written soon after his death,—it may have been composed late in the reign of John. I consider the frequent quotations from the proverbs of king Alfred (which appear to have been popular during the twelfth, and earlier part of the thirteenth centuries, and are not, I think, alluded to in any writers of the end of the thirteenth), a proof of the antiquity of this poem. These proverbs are mentioned by Ailred of Rievaulx, in the first half of the twelfth century. But it is very singular that, although one copy of the Proverbs of Alfred* is found in the same MS. in Jesus College, Oxford, which contains the *Owl and the Nightingale*, yet not one of the quotations in this latter poem is

* The two existing texts of the Proverbs of Alfred are printed in the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*, vol. i. p. 170.

taken from the texts of the Proverbs of Alfred now extant; they seem to have been taken from a poem written in a different metre and style.

The propriety of ascribing this poem to the pen of Nicholas de Guildford, appears also to be doubtful. John de Guildford is said to have been mentioned in a lost leaf of the Jesus College MS. to have been the author of a religious poem in that volume, and he has been supposed to be the brother, or a near relation, of Nicholas de Guildford, and the author of the other poems in the same volume. This however is not a necessary consequence; and the way in which Nicholas de Guildford is mentioned in our poem, leads rather strongly to the presumption that he was the author. He is represented as residing at Portesham in Dorsetshire, and appears to have been smarting under the disappointment of some ambitious views.

I have added to this edition of the Owl and Nightingale, seven smaller poems, preserved in the same Cottonian manuscript. They are all curious, either for their language or for the sentiments they contain; and they are by no means unfavourable specimens of the English lyric poetry of the thirteenth century. The sixth is a collection of political adages which were in vogue through several centuries, and of which a partial

copy will be found in the "*Reliquiæ Antiquæ*," vol. ii. p. 15.* The last piece in the present collection, forms a curious illustration of the manners of the age.

It was originally my intention to add a glossary, but different circumstances have induced me to put this off till another occasion. I could wish to publish a few pieces from the Jesus College manuscript, and from others of the thirteenth century; and then I shall perhaps give a glossary to these, and to the pieces of the same age printed in the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*.

* A somewhat similar piece, in a more modern shape, will be found in the *Reliquiæ Antiquæ*, vol. i. p. 58. See also a note to the Political Songs (Camden Society Publication), p. 387.

1256-1260

THE OWL AND THE NIGHTINGALE.

ICH was in one sumere dale,
In one suthe diȝele hale,
I-herde ich holde grete tale
An hule and one niztingale.
That plait was stif and starc and strong,
Sum wile softe, and lud among ;
An aither aȝen other sval,
And let that wole mod ut al.
And either seide of otheres custe
That alre-worste that hi wuste ;
And hure and hure of othere songe
Hi holde plaiding suthe stronge.

10

 'The niztingale bi-gon the speche,
In one hurne of one breche ;
And sat upone vaire boȝe,
Thar were abute blosme i-noȝe,
In ore waste thicke hegge,
I-meind mid spire and grene segge.
Ho was the gladur vor the rise,
And song a vele cunne wise :

20

Het thuȝte the dreim that he were
 Of harpe and pipe, thau he nere,
 Bet thuȝte that he were i-shote
 Of harpe and pipe than of throte.

Tho stod on old stoc thar bi-side,
 Thar tho ule song hire tide,
 And was mid ivi al bi-growe,
 Hit was thare hule earding-stowe.

The niȝtingale hi i-seȝ,
 And hi bi-hold and over-seȝ,
 An thuȝte wel wl of thare hule,
 For me hi halt lodlich and fule :
 “ Unwiȝt,” ho sede, “ away thu flo!
 Me is the wrs that ich the so;
 I-wis for thine wle lete
 Wel oft ich mine song for-lete;
 Min horte at-flith, and falt mi tonge,
 Thonne thu art to me i-thrūnge.
 Me luste bet speten, thane singe
 Of thine fule ȝoȝelinge.”

30

40

Thos hule abod fort hit was eve,
 Ho ne miȝte no leng bileve,
 Vor hire horte was so gret,
 That wel neȝ hire fnast at-schet ;
 And warp a word thar after longe :
 “ Hu thinc the nu bi mine songe ?
 West thu that ich ne cunne singe,
 Theȝ ich ne cunne of writelinge ?
 I-lome thu dest me grame,
 And seist me bothe tone and schame ;

50

3if ich the holde on mine note,
 So hit bi-tide that ich mote !
 And thu were ut of thine rise,
 Thu sholdest singe an other wse."

The niztingale 3af answare :

" 3if ich me loki wit the bare,
 And me schilde wit the blete,
 Ne reche ich no3t of thine threte ;
 3if ich me holde in mine hegge,
 Ne recche ich never what thu segge.

60

Ich wot that thu art un-milde
 With hom that ne muze from se schilde ;
 And thu tukest wrothe and uvele
 Whar thu mizt over smale fuzele ;
 Vor-thi thu art loth al fuel-kunne,
 And alle ho the driveth honne,
 And the bi-schricheth and bi-gredet,
 And wel narewe the bi-ledet ;
 And ek forthe the sulve mose
 Hire thonkes wolde the to-tose.

70

Thu art lodlich to bi-holde,
 And thu art loth in monie volde ;
 Thi bodi is short, thi swore is smal,
 Grette is thin heved than thu al ;
 Thin e3ene both col-blake and brode,
 Rizt swo ho weren i-peint mid wode ;
 Thu starest so thu wille abiten
 Al that thu mist mid clivre smiten ;
 Thi bile is stif and scharp and hoked,
 Rizt so an owel that is croked,

80

Thar-mid thu clackes oft and longe,
 And that is on of thine songe.
 Ac thu threstest to mine fleshe,
 Mid thine clivres woldest me meshe ;
 The were i-cundur to one frogge,
 [That sit at mulne under cogge],
 Snailes, mus, and fule wizte,
 Both thine cunde and thine rizte.
 Thu sittest a dai, and flizt a nigt,
 Thu cuthest that thu art on un-wizt ; 90
 Thu art lodlich and un-clene,
 Bi thine neste ich hit mene,
 And ek bi thine fule brode,
 Thu fedest on hom a wel ful fode :
 Vel wostu that hi doth thar-inne,
 Hi fuleth hit up to the chinne,
 Ho sitteth thar so hi bo bisne ;
 Thar-bi men segget a vorbisne,
 ‘ Dahet habbe that ilke best,
 That fuleth his owe nest.’ 100
 That other 3er a faukun bredde,
 His nest no3t wel he ne bi-hedde,
 Thar-to thu stele in o day,
 And leidest thar-on thy fole ey ;
 Tho hit bi-com that he ha3te,
 And of his eyre briddes y-ra3te,
 Ho bro3te his briddes mete,
 Bi-hold his nest, i-se3 hi ete ;
 He i-se3 bi one halve
 His nest i-fuled ut halve : 110

The faucun was wroth wit his bridde,
And lude ȝal and sterne chidde,
'Segget me wo havet this i-do,
Ou nas never i-cunde thar-to ;
Hit was i-don ou al oth wiste,
Segge me ȝif ȝe hit wiste.'
Tho quath that on, and quad that other,
'I-wis it was ure oȝer brother,
The ȝond that haved that grete heved,
Wai that hi nis thar-of bi-reved ! 120
Worp hit ut mid the alre-wrste,
That his necke him to-berste.'
The faucun i-lefde his bridde,
And nom that fule brid amidde,
And warp hit of than wilde bowe,
Thar pie and crowe hit to-drowe :
Her-bi men segget a bi-spel,
Theȝ hit ne bo fuliche spel,
'Al so hit is bi than ungode
That is i-cumen of fule brode, 130
And is meind wit fro monne,
Ever he cuth that he com thonne,
That he com of than adel eye,
Theȝ he a fro nest leie.'
Theȝ appel trendli fron thon trowe,
Thar he and other mid growe,
Theȝ he bo thar-from bi-cume,
He cuth wel whonene he is i-cume."

Thos word aȝaf the niztingale,
And after thare longe tale 140

He song so lude and so scharpe,
 Rizt so me grulde schille harpe.
 Thos hule luste thider-ward,
 And hold hire eze nother-wa[r]d,
 And sat to-svolle and i-bolye,
 Also ho hadde one frogge i-svolze.
 For ho wel wiste and was i-war
 That ho song hire a bisemar ;
 And notheles ho 3af andsvare,
 " Whi neltu flon into the bare, 150
 And sewi there unker bo
 Of brizter howe, of vairer blo ?
 No thu havest wel scharpe clawe ;
 Ne kepich nozt that thu me clawe ;
 Thu havest clivers suthe stronge,
 Thu tuengst thar-mid so doth a tonge."
 " Thu tho3test so doth thine i-like,
 Mid faire worde me bi-swike ;
 Ich nolde don that thu me radest
 Ich wiste wel that thu me misraddest ; 160
 Schamie the for thin un-rede !
 Unwro3ten is thi svikel-hede ;
 Schild thine svikeldom vram the lizte,
 And hud that wo3e amon the rizte.
 Thane thu wilt thin un-rizt spene,
 Loke that hit ne bo i-sene ;
 Vor svikedom haved schome and hete,
 3if hit is ope and under-3ete.
 Ne speddestu nozt mid thine un-wrenche,
 For ich am war, and can well blenche ; 170

Ne helpth noȝt that thu bo to-thriste ;
Ich wolde viȝte bet mid liste,
Than thu mid al thine strengthe ;
Ich habbe on brede, and ech on lengthe
Castel god on mine rise ;
' Wel fiȝt that wel flizt,' seith the wise.
Ac lete we awei thos cheste,
Vor sviche wordes both un-werste ;
And fo we on mid riȝte dome,
Mid faire worde and mid y-lome. 180
Theȝ we ne bo at one acorde,
We muȝe bet mid fayre worde,
Wit-ute cheste, and bute fiȝte,
Plaidi mid foȝe and mid riȝte ;
And mai hure either wat hi wile
Mid riȝte segge and mid skile."

Tho quath the hule, " Thu schal us seme,
That kunne and wille riȝt us deme."
" Ich wot wel," quath the niztingale,
" Ne tharef tharof bo no tale. 190
Maister Nichole of Guldeforde,
He is wis and war of worde ;
He is of dome suthe gleu,
And him is loth evrich untheu ;
He wot insiȝt in eche songe,
Wo singet wel, wo singet wronge ;
And he can schede vrom the riȝte
That woȝe, that thuster from the liȝte."

Tho hule one wile hi bi-thozte,
 And after than this word up-brozte : 200
 “Ich granti wel that he us deme,
 Vor theȝ he were wile breme,
 And lof him were niztingale,
 And other wizte gente and smale,
 Ich wot he is nu suthe acoled,
 Nis he vor the noȝt afoled,
 That he for thine olde luve
 Me adun legge and the buve ;
 Ne schaltu nevre so him queme,
 That he for the fals dom deme. 210
 He is him ripe and fastrede,
 Ne lust him nu to none un-rede ;
 Nu him ne lust na more pleie,
 He wil gon a rizte weie.”

The niztingale was al ȝare
 Ho had i-lorned wel aiware :
 “Hule,” ho sede, “seie me soth,
 Wi dostu that un-wiztis doth ?
 Thu singist a nizt, and noȝt a dai,
 And al thi song is wailawai ; 220
 Thu miȝt mid thine songe afere
 Alle that i-hereth thine i-bere ;
 Thu schirchest and ȝollest to thine fere,
 That hit is grislich to i-here,
 Hit thinchest bothe wise and snepe
 Noȝt that thu singe, ac that thu wepe.

Thu flizst a nizt, and nozt a dai ;
 Tharof ich wndri, and wel mai :
 Vor evrich thing that schuniet rizt,
 Hit luveth thuster and hatiet lizt ; 230
 And evrich thing that is lof misdede,
 Hit luveth thuster to his dede.
 A wis word, theȝ hit bo un-clene,
 Is fele manne a muthe i-mene,
 For Alvred king hit seide and wrot,
 ‘ He schuntet that hi ne wl wot.’
 Ich wene that thu dost also,
 Vor thu flizst niztes ever-mo.
 An other thing me is awene,
 Thu havest a nizt eyen wel brizt sene ; 240
 Bi daie thu art stare-blind,
 That thu ne sichst ne bou ne rind ;
 A dai thu art blind other bisne,
 Thar-bi men segget a vorbisne,
 Rizt so hit farth bi than un-gode,
 That nozt ne suth to none gode,
 And is so ful of uvele wrenche,
 That him ne mai noman at-prenche,
 And can welthane thurste wai, 250
 Andthane brizte lat a-wai,
 So doth that both of thine cunde,
 Of lizte nabbeth hi none i-munde.”

Thos hule luste suthe longe,
 And was of-toned suthe stronge ;

Ho quath, "Thu hattest niztingale,
Thu miztest bet hoten galegale,
Vor thu havest to monie tale.
Lat thine tunge habbe spale !
Thu wenest that thes dai both i-noze ;
Lat me nu habbe mine throze : 260
Bo nu stille, and lat me speke,
Ich wille bon of the a-wreke,
And lust hu ich con me bi-telle
Mid rizte sothe witute spelle.
Thu seist that ich me hude a dai,
Thar-to ne segge ich nich ne nai ;
And lust ich telle the ware-vore
Al wi hit is and ware-vore ;
Ich habbe bile stif and stronge,
And gode clivers scharp and longe, 270
So hit bi-cumeth to havekes cunne ;
Hit is min hizte, hit is mi wune,
That ich me draze to mine cunde,
Ne mai noman thare-vore schende ;
On me hit is well i-sene,
Vor rizte cunde ich am so kene,
Vor-thi ich am loth smale fozle,
That floth bi grunde an bi thuvele,
Hi me bi-chermet and bi-gredeth,
And hore flockes to me ledeth ; 280
Me is lof to habbe reste,
And sitte stille in mine neste ;
Vor nere ich never no the betere,
Thif ich mid chavling and mid chatere

Hom schende, and mid fule worde,
So herdes doth, other mid schit worde ;
Ne lust me wit the screwen chide,
For-thi ich wende from hom wide ;
Hit is a wise monne dome,
And hi hit segget wel i-lome, 290
That me ne chide wit the gidie,
Ne wit than ofne me ne 3onie.
At sume sithe herde I telle
Hu Alvred sede on his spelle,
' Loke that thu ne bo thare,
Thar chavling both and cheste 3are ;
Lat sottes chide, and vorth thu go ;'
And ich am wis and do also.
And 3et Alvred seide an other side
A word that is i-sprunge wide, 300
' That wit the fule haveth i-mene,
Ne cumeth he never from him cleine ?'
Wenestu that haveck bo the worse,
Tho3 crowe bi-grede him bi the mershe,
And goth to him mid hore chirme,
Ri3t so hi wille wit him schirme ?
The havec fol3eth gode rede,
And flizt his wei, and lat hem grele.
3et thu me seist of other thinge,
And telst that ich ne can no3t singe, 310
Ac al mi rorde is woning,
And to i-hire grislich thing.
That nis no3t soth, ich singe efne
Mid fulle dreme and lude stefne.

Thu wenist that ech song bo grislich
 That thine pipinge nis i-lich :
 Mi stefne is bold and noȝt un-orne,
 Ho is i-lich one grete horne,
 And thin is i-lich one pipe
 Of one smale wode un-ripe. 320
 Ich singe bet than thu dest ;
 Thu chaterest so doth on Irish preost ;
 Ich singe an eve a riȝt time,
 And soththe won hit is bed-time,
 The thridde sithe ad middel niȝte,
 And so ich mine song adiȝte
 Wone ich i-so arise vorre
 Other dai-rim other dai-sterre,
 Ich do god mid mine throte,
 And warne men to hore note. 330
 Ac thu singest alle-longe niȝt,
 From eve fort hit is dai-liȝt,
 And evre seist thin o song
 So longe so the niȝt is long,
 And evre croweth thi wrecche crei,
 That he ne swiketh niȝt ne dai ;
 Mid thine pipinge thu adunest
 Thas monnes earen thar thu wunest,
 And makest thine song so un-wrth
 That me ne telth of thar noȝt wrth. 340
 Evrich murȝthe mai so longe i-leste,
 That ho shal liki wel un-wreste ;
 Vor harpe and pipe and fuzeles songe
 Misliketh, ȝif hit is to long,

Ne bo the song never so murie,
 That he ne shal thinche wel un-murie,
 3ef he i-lesteth over un-wille;
 So thu miȝt thine song aspille.
 Vor hit is soth, Alvred hit seide,
 And me hit mai ine boke rede, 350
 ‘Evrich thing mai losen his godhede
 Mid unmethe and mid over-dede.’
 Mid este thu the miȝt over-quatie,
 And over-fulle maketh wlatie;
 An evrich mureȝthe mai agon,
 3if me hit halt evre forth in on,
 Bute one, that is Godes riche,
 That evre is svete and evre i-liche:
 Theȝ thu nime evere oth than lepe,
 Hit is evre ful bi-hepe: 360
 Wunder hit is of Godes riche,
 That evre spenth and ever is i-liche.
 3ut thu me seist on other shome,
 That ich am on mine ezen lome;
 An seist for that ich flo bi niȝte,
 That ich ne mai i-so be liȝte.
 Thu liest: on me hit is i-sene,
 That ich habbe gode sene;
 Vor nis nones so dim thusternesse,
 That ich ever i-so the lasse. 370
 Thu wenest that ich ne miȝte i-so
 Vor ich bi daie noȝt ne flo;
 The hare luteth al dai,
 Ac notheles i-so he mai,

3if hundes urneth to him-ward
 He gength wel svithe awai-ward,
 And hoketh pathes svithe narewe,
 And haveth mid him his blenches 3arewe,
 And hupth and stard suthe cove,
 And secheth pathes to the grove : 380
 Ne sholde he vor bothe his e3e
 So don, 3if he the bet ni se3e.
 Ich mai i-son so wel so on hare,
 The3 ich bi daie sitte an dare.
 Thar a3te men bothe in worre,
 An fareth bothe ner an forre,
 An over-vareth fele thoede,
 An doth bi nizte gode noede,
 Ich fol3i than a3te manne,
 An flo bi nigt in hore banne." 390

The niztingale in hire tho3te
 At-hold al this, and longe tho3te
 Wat he thar-after mizte segge ;
 Vor ho ne mizte no3t alegge
 That the hule hadde hire i-sed ;
 Vor he spac bothe ri3t an red.
 An hire of-thu3te that ho hadde
 The speche so for-vorth i-ladde,
 An was oferd that hire answare
 Ne wrthe no3t ari3t i-fare. 400
 Ac notheles he spac boldeliche,
 Vor he is wis that hardeliche

With his vo berth grete i-lete,
That he vor areȝthe hit ne for-lete ;
Vor svich vorth bold ȝif thu fliȝste,
That wle flo ȝif thu viciȝt ;
ȝif he i-sith that thu nart areȝ,
He wile of bore wrchen bareȝ.
And for-thi theȝ the niȝtingale
Were aferd, ho spac bolde tale.

410

“ Hule,” ho seide, “ wi dostu so ?
Thu singest a winter wolawo ;
Thu singest so doth hen a snowe,
Al that ho singeth hit is for wowe ;
A wintere thu singest wrothe and ȝomere,
An evre thu art dumb a sumere ;
Hit is for thine fule nithe,
That thu ne miȝt mid us bo blithe,
Vor thu forbernest wel neȝ for onde
Thane ure blisse cumeth to londe.

420

Thu farest so doth the ille,
Evrich blisse him is un-wille ;
Grucching and luring him both rade,
ȝif he i-soth that men both glade ;
He wolde that he i-seȝe
Teres in evrich monnes eȝe :
Ne roȝte he theȝ flockes were
I-meind bi toppes and bi here.
Al so thu dost on thire side ;
Vor wanne snou lith thicke and wide,
An alle wiȝtes habbeth sorȝe,
Thu singest from eve fort a morȝe.

430

Ac ich alle blisse mid me bringe ;
Ech wizt is glad for mine thinge,
And blisseth hit wanne ich cume,
And hizteth azen mine kume.
The blostme ginneth springe and sprede
Bothe in tro and ek on mede ;
The lilie mid hire faire wlite
Wolcumeth me, that thu hit wte, 440
Bid me mid hire faire blo
That ich shulle to hire flo ;
The rose also mid hire rude,
That cumeth ut of the thorne wode,
Bit me that ich shulle singe
Vor hire luve one skentinge ;
And ich so do thurȝ nȝt and dai,
The more ich singe, the more I mai,
An skente hi mid mine songe,
Ac notheles noȝt over-longe. 450
Wane ich i-so that men both glade,
Ich nelle that hi bon to sade ;
Than is i-do vor than ich com ;
Ich fare azen and do wisdom.
Wane mon hoȝeth of his sheve,
An falewi cumeth on grene leve,
Ich fare hom, and nime leve.
Ne recche ich noȝt of winteres reve ;
Wan ich i-so that cumeth that harde,
Ich fare hom to min erde, 460
An habbe bothe luve and thonc,
That ich her com, and hider swonk.

Wan min erende is i-do,
Shold ich bi-leve ? nai : war-to ?
Vor he nis nother ȝep ne wis,
That longe abid war him nod nis."

Thos hule luste, and leide, an hord
Al this mot, word after word ;
And after thoȝte hu he miȝte
Ansvere vinde best mid riȝte. 470
Vor he mot hine ful wel bi-thenche
That is aferd of plaite wrenche.

" Thu aishest me," the hule sede,
" Wi ich a winter singe and grede.
Hit is gode monne i-wone,
An was from the worlde frome,
That ech god man his frond i-cnowe,
An blisse mid hom sume throwe,
In his huse, at his borde,
Mid faire speche and faire worde. 480

And hure and hure to Cristes masse,
Wane riche and povre, more and lasse,
Singeth condut niȝt and dai,
Ich hom helpe what ich mai.
And ek ich thenche of other thinge,
Thane to pleien other to singe.
Ich hadde her-to gode ansvare,
Anon i-redi and al ȝare,
Vor sumeres tide is al to wlonc,
An doth mis-reken monnes thonk ; 490
Vor he ne recth noȝt of clenness,
Al his thoȝt is of golnesse,

Vor none dor no leng nabadeth,
 Ac evrich upon other rideth :
 The sulve stottes ine the stode,
 Both bothe wilde and mere wode,
 And thu sulf art thar among,
 For of golnesse is al thi song ;
 An azen thet thu wlt teme ;
 Thu art wel modi and wel breme, 500
 Sone so thu havest i-trede,
 Ne miȝtu leng a word i-quethe,
 Ac pipest al so doth a mose,
 Mid chokeringe, mid stevne hose.
 ȝet thu singst worse thon the hei-sugge,
 ȝat flizth bi grunde among the stubbe :
 Wane thi lust is ago,
 Thanne is thi song ago also.
 A sumere chorles awedeth,
 And vor-crempeth, and vor-bredeth ; 510
 Hit nis for luve notheles,
 Ac is the chorles wode res ;
 Vor wane he haveth i-do his dede,
 I-fallen is al his boldhede ;
 Habbe he isstunge under gore,
 Ne last his luve no lenger more.
 Al so hit is on thine mode,
 So sone so thu sittest abroad,
 Thu for-lost al thine wise,
 Al so thu farest on thine rise. 520
 Wane thu havest i-do thi gome,
 Thi stevne goth anon to shome.

Ac wane niztes cumeth longe,
 And bringeth forstes starke an stronge,
 Thanne erest hit is i-sene
 War is the snelle, war is the kene.
 At than harde me mai avinde
 Wo geth forth, wo lith bi-hinde ;
 Me mai i-son at thare node,
 Wan me shal harde wike bode, 530
 Thanne ich am snel, and pleie and singe,
 And hizte me mid mi skentinge ;
 Of none wintere ich me recche,
 Vor ich nam non a sunde wrecche,
 And ek ich frouri vele wizte
 That mid hom nabbed none miztte.
 Hi both hozfule and vel arme,
 An secheth zorne to the warme :
 Oft ich singe vor hom the more,
 For lutli sum of hore sore. 540
 Hu thincth the ? artu zut i-nume ?
 Artu mid rizte over-cume ?”

“Nay, nay,” sede the niztingale,
 “Thu shalt i-here another tale.
 zet nis thos speche i-brozt to dome ;
 Ac bo wel stille, and lust nu to me,
 Ich shal mid one bare worde
 Do that thi speche wrht for-worthe.”

“That nere noht rizt,” the hule sede,
 “Thu havest bi-cloped, al so thu bede, 550

An ich the habbe i-3ive ansvare ;
Ac ar we to unker dome fare
Ich wille speke toward the,
Al so thu speke toward me,
An thu me ansvare 3if thu mi3t.
Seie me nu, thu wrecche wi3t,
Is in the eni other note,
Bute thu havest schille throte ?
Thu nart no3t to non other thinge,
Bute thu canst of chateringe ; 560
Vor thu art lutel an unstrong,
An nis thi re3el nothing long.
Wat dostu godes among monne ?
Na mo the deth a wercche wranne.
Of the ne cumeth non other god,
Bute thu gredest svich thu bo wod ;
An bo thi piping over-go,
Ne both on the craftes namo.
Alvred sede, that was wis,
He mi3te wel, for soth hit is, 570
' Nis no man for his bare songe
Lof ne wrth no3t suthe longe ;
Vor that is a for-worthe man,
That bute singe no3t ne can.'
Thu nart bute on for-worthe thing ;
On the nis bute chatering ;
Thu art dim, an of fule howe,
An thinchest a lutel soti clowe ;
Thu nart fair, no thu nart strong,
Ne thu nart thicke, ne thu nart long ; 580

Thu havest i-mist al of fairhede,
 An lutel is al thi godede.
 An other thing of the ich mene :
 Thu nart vair, ne thu nart clene.
 Wane thu comest to manne haze,
 Thar thornes both and ris i-draze,
 Bi hegge and bi thicke wode,
 Thar men goth oft to hore node,
 Thar-to thu dra3st, thar-to thu wnest,
 An other clene stede thu schunest. 590
 Wan ich flo niztes after muse,
 I mai the vinde ate rum-huse,
 Among the wode, among the netle,
 Thu sittest and singst bi-hinde the setle ;
 Thar me mai the i-lomest finde,
 Thar men worpeth hore bi-hinde.
 3et thu atvitest me mine mete,
 An seist that ich fule wiztes ete :
 Ac wat etestu, that thu ne lize,
 Bute attercoppe and fule vlize? 600
 An wormes, 3if thu mi3te finde
 Among the volde of harde rinde?
 3et ich can do wel gode wike,
 Vor ich can loki manne wike ;
 An mine wike both wel gode,
 Vor ich helpe to manne node ;
 Ich can nimen mus at berne,
 An ek at chirche ine the derne ;
 Vor me is lof to Cristes huse,
 To clansi hit with fule muse ; 610

Ne schal thar nevre come to
Ful wizt, 3if ich hit mai i-vo.
An gif me lust one mi skentinge,
To yernen other wnienge,
Ich habbe at wude tron wel grete,
Mit thicke boze nothing blete,
Mid ivi grene al bi-growe,
That evre stont i-liche i-blowe,
An his hou never ne vor-lost,
Wan hit snuith ne wan hit frost ; 620
Thar-in ich habbe god i-hold,
A winter warm, a sumere cold.
Wane min hus stont bri3t and grene,
Of thine nis nothing i-sene.
3et thu me telst of other thinge,
Of mine briddes seist gabbinge
That hore nest nis no3t clene,
Hit is fale other wizte i-mene ;
Vor hors a stable, and oxe a stalle,
Both al that hom wule thar falle ; 630
An lutle children in the cradele,
Bothe chorles an ek athele,
Both al that in hore 3oethe
That hi vor-leteth in hore du3ethe.
Wat can that 3ongling hit bi-hede ?
3if hit mis-deth, hit mod nede ;
A vorbisne is of olde i-wrne,
That 'node maketh old wif urne.'
An 3et ich habbe an other andsware ;
Wiltu to mine neste vare, 640

An loki hu hit is i-diȝt?
 ȝif thu art wis, lorni thu miȝst:
 Mi nest is holȝ and rum amidde,
 So hit is softest mine bridde;
 Hit is broiden al abute
 Vrom the neste vor withute,
 Thar-to hi goth to hore node;
 Ac wat thu menest ich hom for-bode.
 We nimeth ȝeme of manne bure,
 An after than we maketh ure.
 Men habbet, among other i-wende,
 A rum-hus at hore bures ende,
 Vor that hi nelleth to vor-go;
 An mine briddes doth al so.
 Site nu stille, chaterestre!
 Nere thu never i-bunde vastre;
 Her-to ne vindestu never andsware;
 Hong up thin ax, nu thu miȝt fare!"

650

The niȝtingale at thisse worde
 Was wel neȝ ut of rede i-worthe,
 An thoȝte ȝorne on hire mode,
 ȝif ho oȝt elles understode,
 ȝif ho kuthe oȝt bute singe,
 That miȝte helpe to other thinge,
 Her-to ho moste andswere vinde,
 Other mid alle bon bi-hinde.
 An hit is suthe strong to fiȝte
 Aȝen soth and aȝen riȝte;
 He mot gon to al mid ginne,

660

Wan the horte both on winne, 670
 An the man mot on other segge,
 He mot bi-hemmen and bi-legge,
 3if muth withute mai bi-wro
 That me the horte no3t ni-so ;
 An sone mai a word mis-reke,
 Thar muth shal a3en horte speke,
 An sone mai a word mis-storte,
 Thar muth shal speken a3en horte.
 Ac notheles 3ut upe thon,
 Her is to red wo hure kon ; 680
 Vor never nis wit so kene,
 So wane red him is ayene ;
 Thanne erest kumed his 3ephede,
 Wone hit is alre-mest on drede ;
 For Alvered seide of olde quide,
 An 3ut hit nis of horte i-slide.
 ‘ Wone the bale is alre-hecst,
 Thonne is the bote alre-necst,’
 Vor wit west among his sore,
 An for his sore hit is the more. 690
 Vor-thi nis nevere mon redles,
 Ar his horte bo witles ;
 Ac 3if that he for-lost his wit,
 Thonne is his red purs al to-slit ;
 3if he ne kon his wit at-holde,
 Ne vint he red in one volde ;
 Vor Alvrd seide, that wel kuthe,
 Evere he spac mid sothe muthe,
 ‘ Wone the bale is alre-hecst,
 Thanne is the bote alre-nest.’ 700

The niztingale al hire hoze
Mid rede hadde wel bi-toze,
Among the harde, among the tozte,
Ful wel mid rede hire bi-thozte,
An hadde andswere gode i-funde
Among al hire harde stunde.

“Hule, thu axest me,” ho seide,
“3if ich kon eni other dede,
Bute singen in sume tide,
An bringe blisse for and wide. 710
Wi axestu of craftes mine?
Betere is min on than alle thine;
Betere is o song of mine muthe,
Than al that evre thi kun kuthe.
An lust, ich telle the ware-vore:
Wostu to than man was i-bore?
To thare blisse of hovenene riche,
Thar ever is song and mur3the i-liche.
Thider fundeth evrich man
That eni thing of gode kan. 720
Vor-thi me singth in holi chirche,
An clerkes ginneth songes wirche,
That man i-thenche bi the songe
Wider he shal; and thar bon longe,
That he the mur3the ne vor-3ete,
Ac thar-of thenche and bi-3ete,
An nime 3eme of chirche stevene,
Hu murie is the blisse of hovenene.
Clerkes, muneke, and kanunes,

Thar both thos gode wicke tunes, 730
Ariseth up to midel nizte,
An singeth of the hovenne lizte ;
An prostes upe londe singeth,
Wane the lizt of daie springeth ;
An ich hom helpe wat I mai,
Ich singe mid hom nizt and dai ;
An ho both alle for me the gladdere,
An to the songe both the raddere.
Ich warni men to here gode,
That hi bon blithe on hore mode, 740
An bidde that hi moten i-seche
Than ilke song that ever is eche.
Nu thu mizt, hule, sitte and clinge ;
Her among nis no chateringe.
Ich graunti that we go to dome
To-fore the sulfe the pope of Rome.
Ac abid 3ete notheles,
Thu shalt i-here an other wes ;
Ne shaltu for Engelonde
At thisse worde me at-stonde. 750
Wi atvitestu me mine unstrengthe,
An mine ungrete, and mine unlengthe ?
An seist that ich nam no3t strong,
Vor ich nam nother gret ne long ?
Ac thu nost never wat thu menst,
Bute lese wordes thu me lenst ;
For ich kan craft, and ich kan liste,
An ware-vore ich am thus thriste ;
Ich kan wit and song manteine,

Ne triste ich to non other maine ; 760
Vor soth hit is that seide Alvred,
' Ne mai no strengthe azen red ;
Oft spet wel a lute liste,
Thar muche strengthe sholde miste ;
Mid lute strengthe, thurȝ ginne,
Castel and burȝ me mai i-winne ;
Mid liste me mai walle felle,
An worpe of horsse kniȝtes snelle.
Uvel strengthe is lutel wurth [thinge],
Ac wisdom naveth non evening. 770
An hors is strengur than a mon ;
Ac for hit non i-wit ne kon,
Hit berth on rugge grete semes,
An draȝth bi-vore grete temes,
An tholeth bothe ȝerd and spure,
An stont i-teid at mulne dure ;
An hit deth that mon hit hot,
An for than that hit no wit not,
Ne mai his strenthe hit i-shilde
That hit nabuȝth the lute childe. 780
Mon deth mid strengthe and mid witte
That other thing nis non his fitte.
Theȝ alle strengthe at one were,
Monnes wit ȝet more were ;
Vor the mon, mid his crafte,
Over-kumeth al orthliche shafte.
Al so ich do mid mine one songe,
Bet than thu, al the ȝer longe.
Vor mine crafte men me luvieth,

Vor thine strengthe men the shunieth. 790
Telstu bi me the wurs for than
That ich bute anne craft ne kan ?
3if tveie men goth to wraslinge,
An either other faste thringe,
An the on can swenges suthe fele,
An kan his wrenches wel for-hele,
An the other ne can sweng but anne,
An the is god with eche manne,
An mid thon one leith to grunde
Anne after other a lutle stunde ; 800
Wat tharf he recche of a mo swenge,
Wone the on him is swo genge ?
The seist that thu canst fele wike ;
Ac ever ich am thin un-i-like.
Do thine craftes alle to-gadere,
3et is min on horte betere.
Oft wan hundes foxes driveth,
The kat ful wel him sulve liveth,
The3 he ne kunne wrench bute anne ;
The fox so godne ne can nanne, 810
The he kunne so vele wrenche,
That he wenth eche hunde at-prenche ;
Vor he can pathes rizte and wo3e,
An he kan hongi bi the bo3e,
An so for-lost the hund his fore,
An turnth a3en eft to than more ;
The vox kan crope bi the heie,
An turne ut from his forme weie,
An eft sone kume thar-to ;

Thonne is the hundes smel for-do ; 820
 He not thurs the i-meinde smak,
 Wether he shal avorth the abak ;
 3if the vox mist of al this dwole,
 At than ende he cropth to hole ;
 Ac natheles mid alle his wrenche
 Ne kan he hine so bi-thenche,
 The3 he bo 3ep an suthe snel,
 That he ne lost his rede vel.
 The cat ne kan wrench bute anne,
 Nother be dune ne bi venne ; 830
 Bute he kan climbe suthe wel,
 Thar-mid he wereth his greie vel ;
 Al so ich segge bi mi solve,
 Betere is min on than thine twelve."

" Abid ! abid !" the ule seide,
 " Thu gest al to mid swikelede ;
 Alle thine wordes thu bi-leist,
 That hit thincth soth al that thu seist ;
 Alle thine wordes both i-slied,
 An so bi-semed an bi-liked, 840
 That alle tho that hi avoth,
 Hi weneth that thu segge soth.
 Abid ! abid ! me shal the 3ene,
 Thu hit shal wrthe wel i-sene,
 That thu havest muchel i-lo3e,
 Wone thi lesing both unwro3e.
 Thu seist that thu singist mankunne,
 And techest hom that hi fundieth honne

Up to the songe that evre i-lest :

Ac hit is alre wnder mest,

850

That thu darst lize so opeliche.

Wenest thu hi bringe so liztliche

To Godes riche al singinge ?

Nai ! nai ! hi shulle wel avinde,

That hi mid longe wope mote

Of hore sunnen bidde bote,

Ar hi mote ever kume thare.

Ich rede thi that men bo zare,

An more wepe thane singe,

That fundeth to than hoven kinge.

860

Vor nis no man witute sunne ;

Vor-thi he mot ar he wende honne

Mid teres an mid wope bete,

That him bo sur that er was swete.

Thar-to ich helpe, God hit wot !

Ne singe ih hom no foliot ;

For al me song is of longinge,

An i-mend sum del mid woninge,

That mon bi me hine bi-thenche,

That he grom for his unwrenche ;

870

Mid mine songe ich hine pulte,

That ghe grom for his gulte.

3if thu gest her-of to disputinge,

Ich wepe bet thane thu singe ;

3if rizt goth forth, and abak wrong,

Betere is mi wop thane thi song.

The3 sume men bo thur3ut gode,

An thur3ut clene on hore mode,

Hon longeth honne notheles,
That both her wo is hom thes, 880
Vor theȝ hi bon hom solve i-borȝe,
Hi ne soth her nowiȝt bote sorwe;
Vor other men hi wepeth sore,
An for hom biddeth Cristes ore.
Ich helpe monne on either halve,
Mi muth haveth tweire kunne salve;
Than gode ich fulste to longinge,
Vor wan him longeth ich him singe;
An than sunfulle ich helpe alswo, 890
Vor ich him teche ware is wo.
ȝet ich the ȝeve in other wise;
Vor wane thu sittest on thine rise,
Thu draȝst men to fleses luste,
That willeth thine songes luste;
Al thu for-lost the murȝthe of hovenene,
For thar-to nevestu none stevene;
Al that thu singst is of golnesse,
Fer nis on the non holinesse,
Ne wened naman, for thi pipinge,
That eni preost in chirgce singe. 900
ȝet I the wulle an oder segge,
ȝif thu hit const a-riht bi-legge.
Wi nultu singe an oder theode,
War hit is muchele more neode?
Thu neaver ne singst in Irlonde,
Ne thu ne cumest noȝt in Scotlonde:
Hwi nultu fare to Noreweie?
An singin men of Galeweie?

Thar beodh men that lutel kunne
 Of songe that is bineodhe the sunne ; 910
 Wi nultu thare preoste singe,
 An teche of thire writelinge ?
 An wisi hom mid thire stevene,
 Hu engeles singeth ine heovene ?
 Thu farest so dodh an ydel wel,
 That springeth bi burne thar is snel,
 An let for-drue the dune,
 And floh on idel thar a-dune.
 Ac ich fare bothe north and soth,
 In eavereuch londe ich am cuuth ; 920
 East and west, feor and neor,
 I do wel faire mi meoster,
 An warni men mid mine bere,
 That thi dweole song heo ne for-lere.
 Ich wisse men mid mine songe
 That hi ne sunegi nowiht longe ;
 I bidde hom that heo i-swike,
 That heom seolve ne bi-swicke :
 For betere is that heo wepen here,
 Than elles hwar to beon deovlene fere." 930

The niztingale was i-gremet,
 An ek heo was sumdel of-chamed ;
 For the hule hire atwiten hadde,
 In hwucche stude he sat an gradde,
 Bi-hinde the bure, among the wede,
 War men godh to here neode ;
 An sat sum del, and heo bi-thohte,

An wiste wel on hire thohte ;
 The wraththe bi-nimeth monnes red,
 For hit seide the king Alfred, 940
 ‘Sele endedh wel the lothe,
 An selde plaidedh wel the wrothe.’
 For wraththe meinth the horte blod,
 That hit floweth so wilde flod,
 An al the heorte over-geth,
 That heo haveth no thing bute breth,
 An so for-leost al hire liht,
 That heo ne sith sodh ne riht.
 The niztingale hi understod,
 An over-gan lette hire mod ; 950
 He mihte bet speken a sele,
 Than mid wraththe wordes deale.

“Hule,” heo seide, “lust nu hider,
 Thu schalt falle, the wei is slider :
 Thu seist ich fleo bi-hinde bure ;
 Hit is riht, the bur is ure,
 Thar laverd liggeth and lavedi,
 Ich schal heom singe and sitte bi.
 Wenstu that vise men for-lete,
 For fule venne the riztte strete ? 960
 Ne sunne the later shine,
 Theȝ hit bo ful ine nest thine ?
 Sholde ich for one hole brede,
 For-lete mine rizte stede,
 That ich ne singe bi the bedde,
 Thar loverd haveth his love i-bedde ?

Hit is mi riht, hit is mi laze,
 Thar-to the herst ich me draze.
 Ac zet thu zelpst of thine songe,
 That thu canst zolle wrothe and stronge, 970
 An seist thu visest mankunne
 That hi bi-wepen hore sunne.
 Solde euch mon wonie and grede,
 Riht suich hi weren un-lede ;
 Solde hi zollen also thu dest,
 Hi mizte oferen here brost.
 Man schal bo stille, and nozt grede,
 He mot bi-wepe his mis-dede.
 Ac war is Cristes heriinge,
 Thar me shal grede and lude singe, 980
 Nis nother to lud ne to long,
 At rizte time chirche song.
 Thu zolst and wones, and ich singe,
 Thi stevene is wop, and min skentinge ;
 Ever mote thu zolle and wepen,
 That thu thi lif mote for-leten,
 An zollen mote thu so heze,
 That thu berste bo thin eze !
 Wether is betere of twere twom,
 That mon bo blithe other grom ? 990
 So bo hit ever in unker sithe,
 That thu bo sori and ich blithe !
 Zut thu aisheist wi ich ne fare
 In to other londe and singe thare.
 No ! what sholde ich among hom do,
 War never blisse ne com to ?

That lond nis god, ne hit nis este,
Ac wildernisse hit is and weste,
Knarres and cludes hoventinge,
Snou and hazel hom is genge ; 1000
That lond is grislich and un-vele,
The men both wilde and un-i-sele ;
Hi nabbeth nother grith ne sibbe ;
Hi ne reccheth hu hi libbe,
Hi eteth fihs an flehs un-sode,
Svich wulves hit hadde to-brode ;
Hi drinketh milc, and wei thar-to,
Hi nute elles wat hi do ;
Hi nabbeth noth win ne bor,
Ac libbeth al so wilde dor ; 1010
Hi goth bi-tizt mid ruze velle,
Rizt svich hi comen ut of helle ;
Theȝ eni god man to hom come,
(So wile dude sum from Rome)
For hom to lere gode thewes,
An for to leten hore un-thewes,
He mizte bet sitte stille,
Vor al his wile he sholde spille ;
He mizte bet teche ane bore
To weȝe bothe sheld and spere, 1020
Than me that wilde folc i-bringe,
That hi me segge wolde i-here singe.
Wat sol ich thar mid mine songe ?
Ne sunge ich hom never so longe,
Mi song were i-spild ech del ;
For hom ne mai halter ne bridel

Bringe vrom hore wude wise,
 Ne mon mid stele ne mid ire;
 Ac thar lond is bothe este and god,
 An thar men habbeth milde mod, 1030
 Ich noti mid hom mine throte;
 Vor ich mai do thar gode note,
 An bringe hom love tithinge,
 Vor ich of chirche songe singe.
 Hit was i-seid in olde laze,
 An zet i-last thilke soth-saze,
 That man shal erien an sowe
 Thar he wenth after sum god mowe;
 For he is wod that soweth his sed
 Thar never gras ne sprinth ne bled." 1040

The hule was wroth to cheste rad,
 Mid thisse worde hire ezen a-brad,
 "Thu seist thu witest manne bures,
 Thar leues both and faire flores,
 Thar two i-love in one bedde
 Liggeth bi-clop and wel bi-hedde;
 Enes thu sunge, ic wod wel ware,
 Bi one bure, and woldest lere
 The lefti to an uvel luve,
 An sunge bothe loze and buve, 1050
 An lerdest hi to don shome
 An un-ri3t of hire licome;
 The loverd that sone under-3at,
 Limi and grinew, wel ei wat,

Sette and ledde the for to lacche ;
 Thu come sone to than hacche,
 Thu were i-nime in one grine,
 Al hit abozte thine shine,
 Thu naddest non other dom ne laze,
 Bute mid wilde horse were to-draze, 1060
 Vonde 3if thu mi3t eft mis-rede,
 Wather thu wult wif the maide ;
 Thi song mai bo so longe genge,
 That thu shalt wippen on a sprengē."

The niztingale at thisse worde,
 Mid sworde an mid speres orde,
 3if ho mon, were, wolde fi3te ;
 Ac tho ho bet do ne mi3te,
 Ho vazt mid hire wise tunge,
 ' Wel fi3t that wel specth,' seith the songe ; 1070
 Of hire tunge ho nom red,
 ' Wel fi3t that wel specth,' seide Alvred.

" Wat ! seistu this for mine shome ?
 The loverd hadde her-of grame :
 He was so gelus of his wive,
 That he ne mi3te for his live
 I-so that man with hire speke,
 That his horte nolde breke.
 He hire bi-leck in one bure,
 That hire was bothe stronge and sure ; 1080
 Ich hadde of hire milse an ore,
 An sori was for hire sore,

An skente hi mid mine songe,
Al that ich mizte, rathe an longe.
Vor than the knizt was with me wroth,
Vor rizte nithe ich was him loth ;
He dude me his ozene shome,
Ac al him turnde it to grome ;
That underwat the king Henri,
Jesus his soule do merci ! 1090
He let for-bonne thene knizt
That hadde i-don so muchel un-wrizt,
Ine so gode kinges londe,
Vor rizte nithe and for fule onde
Let thane lutle fuzel nime,
An him for-deme lif an lime ;
Hit was wrthsipe al mine kunne,
For thon the knizt for-les his wunne,
An 3af for me an hundred punde ;
An mine briddes seten i-sunde, 1100
An hadde soththe blisse and hizte ;
An were blithe, and wel mizte ;
Vor thon ich was so wel awreke,
Ever eft ich dart the bet speke ;
Vor hit bi-tidde ene swo,
Ich am the blithur ever mo ;
Nu ich mai singe war ich wulle,
Ne dar me never eft mon a-grulle.
Ac thu, eremig ! thu wrecche gost !
Thu ne canst finde, ne thu nost, 1110
An hol3 stok war thu the mizt hude,
That me ne twengeth thine hude.

Vor children, gromes, heme, and hine,
 Hi thencheth alle of thire pine ;
 3if hi mizte i-so the sitte,
 Stones hi doth in hore slitte,
 An the to-tornedh and to-heneth,
 An thine fule bon to-sheneth.

3if thu art i-worpe other i-shote,
 Thanne thu mizt erest to note. 1120

Vor me the hoth in one rodde,
 An thu mid thine fule codde,
 An mid thine ateliche spore,
 Bi-werest manne corn vrom dore ;
 Nis nother no3t thi lif ne thi blod,
 Ac thu art shueles suthe god.

War nowe sedes both i-sowe,
 Pinnuc, golfinc, rok, ne crowe,
 Ne dar thar never cumen i-hende,
 3if thi buc hongeth at than ende. 1130

War tron shulle a-3ere blowe,
 An 3unge sedes springe and growe,
 Ne dar no fuzel thar-to vonge
 3if thu art thar-over i-honge.
 Thi lif is evre luther and qued,
 Thu nard no3t bute ded.

Nu thu mizt wite sikerliche,
 That thine leches both grisliche,
 The wile thu art on lif-daze ;
 Vor wane thu hongest i-slaze, 1140
 3ut hi both of the of-dradde,
 The fuzeles that the er bi-gradde.

Mid riȝte men both with the wrothe,
 For thu singist ever of hore lothe ;
 Al that thu singst rathe other late,
 Hit is ever of manne un-wate ;
 Wane thu havest a-niȝt i-grad,
 Men both of the wel sore of-drad.
 Thu singst war sum man shal be dea
 Ever thu bodest sumne qued ; 1150
 Thu singst aȝen eiȝte lure,
 Other of summe frondes rure ;
 Other thu bodes huses brune,
 Other ferde of manne, other thoves rune ;
 Other thu bodest cualm of oreve ;
 Other that lond-folc wurth i-dorve ;
 Other that wif lost hire make ;
 Other thu bodest cheste an sake ;
 Ever thu singist of manne hareme,
 Thurȝ the hi both sori and areme ; 1160
 Thu ne singst never one sithe,
 That hit nis for sum un-sithe.
 Her-vore hit is that me the shuneth,
 An the to-torveth and to-buneth,
 Mid stave, and stoone, and turf, and clute,
 That thu ne miȝt no war atrute.
 Dahet ever svich budel in tune,
 That ever bodeth un-wreste rune,
 An ever bringeth uvele tithinge,
 An that ever specth of uvele thinge ! 1170
 God Almiȝti wrthe him wroth,
 An al that werieth linnene cloth !”

The hule ne abot noȝt swith longe,
 Ah ȝef ondsware starke and stronge :
 “ Wat ! ” quath ho, “ hartu i-hoded ?
 Other thu kursest al un i-hoded ?
 For prestes wike ich wat thu dest,
 Ich not ȝef thu were ȝavre prest ;
 Ich not ȝef thu canst masse singe,
 I-noh thu canst of mansinge. 1180
 Ah hit is for thine alde nithe,
 That thu me akursedest odher sidhe ;
 Ah thar-to is lihtlich ondsware :
 ‘ Drah to the ! ’ cwadh the cartare.
 Wi attwitestu me mine in-sihte,
 An min i-wit, and mine miȝte ?
 For ich am witi ful i-wis,
 An wod al that to kumen is :
 Ich wot of hunger, of hergonge ;
 Ich wot ȝef men schule libbe longe ; 1190
 Ich wat ȝef wif luste hire make ;
 Ich wat war schal beo nith and wrake ;
 Ich wot hwo schal beon an-honge,
 Other elles fulne deth a-fonge ;
 ȝef men habbeth bataile i-nume,
 Ich wat hwather schal beon over-kume ;
 Ich wat ȝif cwalm scal comen on orfe,
 An ȝif dor schul ligge and storve ;
 Ich wot ȝef treon schule blowe ;
 Ich wat ȝef cornes schule growe ; 1200
 Ich wot ȝef huses schule berne ;
 Ich wot ȝef men schule eorne other erne ;

Ich wot 3ef sea schal schipes drenche ;
 Ich wot 3ef snuwes schal uvele clenche ;
 An 3et ich con muchel more :
 Ich con i-noh in bokes lore ;
 An eke ich can of the Goddspelle,
 More than ich nule the telle ;
 For ich at chirche come i-lome,
 An muche leorni of wisdomes ; 1210
 Ich wat al of the tacninge,
 An of other feole thinge ;
 3ef eni mon schal rem abide,
 Al ich hit wot ear hit i-tide.
 Ofte for mine muchele i-witte
 Wel sori-mod and worth ich sitte,
 Wan ich i-seo that sum wrechede
 Is manne neh, innoh ich grede,
 Ich bidde that men beon i-warte,
 An habbe gode reades 3arte. 1220
 For Alfred seide a wis word,
 Euch mon hit schulde legge on hord,
 '3ef thu i-sihst [him er] he beo i-cume,
 His strncethe is him wel neh bi-nume.'
 An grete duntas beoth the lasse,
 3ef me i-kepthe mid i-warnesse ;
 An fleo schal toward mis-3enge.
 3ef thu i-sihst hu fleo of strenge,
 For thu mi3t blenche wel and fleo,
 3if thu i-sihst heo to the teo. 1230
 That eni man beo falle in odwite,
 Wi schal he me his sor atwite ?

Thah ich i-seo his harm bi-vore,
 Ne cometh hit noȝt of me thar-vare :
 Thah thu i-seo that sum blind mon,
 That nanne rihtne wei ne con,
 To thare diche his dweole fulied,
 An falleth and thar-one sulied,
 Wenest thu, thah ich al i-seo,
 That hit for me the rathere beo? 1240
 Al swo hit fareth bi mine witte,
 Hwanne ich on mine bowe sitte,
 Ich wot and i-seo swithe brihte,
 An summe men kumed harm thar rihte ;
 Schal he that ther-of nothing not,
 Hit wite me for ich hit wot?
 Schal he his mis-hap wite me,
 For ich am wisure thane he?
 Hwanne ich i-seo that sum wrechede
 Is manne neh, i-noh ich grede, 1250
 An bidde i-noh that hi heom schilde,
 For toward heom is [harne unmylde] ;
 Ah thah ich grede lude an stille,
 Al hit i-tid thurth Godes wille.
 Hwi wulleth men of me hi mene,
 Thah ich mid sothe heo a-wene?
 Thah ich hi warni al that ȝer,
 Nis heom ther-fore harem no the ner.
 Ah ich heom singe, for ich wolde
 That hi wel understonde schulde 1260
 That sum un-selthe heom is i-hende.
 Hwan ich min song to heom sende,

Naveth no man none sikerhede
 That he ne mai wene and adrede,
 That sum un-hwate ney him beo,
 Thah he ne conne hit i-seo.
 For-thi seide Alfred swithe wel
 And his worde was goddspel,
 That 'evereuch man the bet him beo,
 Eaver the bet he hine be-seo.' 1270
 Ne truste no mon to his weole
 To swithe, thah he habbe veole;
 Nis nout so hot that hit nacolet, h
 Ne noȝt so hwit that hit ne solet, h
 Ne noȝt so leof that hit ne a-lotheth, h
 Ne noȝt so glad that hit ne a-wrotheth;
 Ah eavreeuh thing that eche nis
 A-gon schal and al this worlde's blis.
 Nu thu miȝt wite readliche,
 That eavere thu spekest gideliche; 1280
 For al that thu me seist for schame,
 Ever the seolve hit turneth to grome.
 Go so hit go, at eche fenge
 Thu fallest mid thine ahene swenge,
 Al that thu seist for me to schende,
 Hit is mi wurschipe at than ende.
 Bute thu wille bet a-ginne,
 Ne shaltu bute schame i-winne."

The niztingale sat and sizte,
 And hohful was, and ful wel miȝte, 1290

For the hule swo i-speke hadde,
An hire speche swo i-ladde,
Heo was howful and erede,
Hwat heo thar after hire sede ;
Ah neotheles heo hire understod,
“ Wat ! ” heo seide, “ hule, artu wod ?
Thu 3eolpest of seolliche wisdomes,
Thu nustest wanene he the come,
Bute hit of wicche crefte were :
Thar-of thu, wrecche, moste the skere, 1300
3if thu wult among manne boe ;
Other thu most of londe fleo,
For alle theo that ther-of cuthe,
Heo were i-furn of prestes muthe.
Amanset swuch thu art 3ette,
Thu wiecchecraftes neaver ne lete.
Ich the seide nu lutel ere,
An thu askedest 3if ich were
A bisimere to preost i-hoded ?
Ah the mansing is so i-broded, 1310
Thah no preost a londe nere,
A wrecche neotheles thu were ;
For eavereuch chil[d] the cleopeth fule,
An evereuch man a wrecche hule.
Ich habbe i-herd, and soth hit is,
The mon mot beo wel storre-wis,
An wite innoth of wucche thinge kunne,
So thou seist that is i-wune.
Hwat canstu, wrecche thing, of storre,
Bute that thu bi-haitest hi feorre ? 1320

Al swo deth mani dor and man,
 Theo of hswucche nawiht ne con.
 On ape mai a boc bi-halde,
 An leves wenden, and eft folde;
 Ah he ne con the bet thar-vore
 Of clerkes lore top ne more.
 Thah thu i-seo the steorre al swa,
 Nartu the wisure neaver the mo.
 Ah 3et thu, fule thing, me chist,
 An wel grimliche me atwist, 1330
 That ich singe bi manne huse,
 An teache wif breke spuse.
 Thu liest i-wis, thu fule thing!
 Thine nas neaver i-schend spusing.
 Ah soth hit is ich singe and grede,
 Thar lavedies beoth, and faire maide;
 And soth hit is of luve ich singe,
 For god wif mai ispusing
 Bet luvien hire ozene were,
 Thane awet hire copenere; 1340
 An maide mai luve cheose,
 That hire wurthschipe ne for-leose,
 An luvie mid rihte luve
 Thane the schal beon hire buve.
 Swiche luve ich i-tache and lere,
 Ther-of beoth al mine i-bere.
 Thah sum wif beo of nesche mode,
 For wummon beoth of softe blode,
 That heo for sume sottes lore
 The 3eorne bit and siketh sore, 1350

Mis-steppe and mis-do summe stunde,
 Schal ich thar-vore beon i-bunde?
 3if wimmen luvieþ un-rede,
 Hwitistu me hore mis-dede?
 3ef wimmon thencheth luvie derne,
 Ne ne mai ich mine songes werne;
 Wummon mai pleie under clothe,
 Wether heo wile wel the wrothe;
 And heo mai do bi mine songe,
 Hwather heo wule wel the wronge. 1360
 For nis a worlde thing so god,
 That ne mai do sum un-god,
 3if me hit wule turne amis;
 For gold and seolver god hit is,
 An notheles thar-mid thu mi3t
 Spus-bruche buggen and un-ri3t;
 Wepne beoth gode grith to halde,
 Ah neotheles thar-mide beoth men a-cwalde
 A3eines riht, an fale londe,
 Thar theoves hi beredh an honde. 1370
 Al swa hit is bi mine songe,
 Thah heo beo god, me hine mai mis-fonge,
 An drahe hine to sothede,
 An to othre uvele dede.
 Ah schaltu, wrecch, luve tele,
 Bo wuch ho bo vich luve is fele,
 Bi-tweone wepmon and wimmane?
 Ah 3ef heo is at-broide thenne,
 He is un-fele and for-brode,
 Wroth wurthe heom the holi rode. 1380

The rihte i-kunde swo for-breideth,
Wunder hit is that heo nawedeth ;
An swo heo doth, for heo beoth wode,
The bute nest goth to brode.
Wummon is of nesche flesche,
An flesches lustes is strong to cwesse ;
Nis wunder nan thah he abide,
For flesches lustes hi maketh slide ;
Ne beoth heo nowt alle for-lore,
That stumpeth at the flesches more. 1390
For moni wummon haveth mis-do,
That a-ris of the slo.
Ne beoth nowt ones alle sunne,
For than hi beoth tweire kunne ;
Sun a-rist of the flesches luste,
An sum of the gostes custe.
Thar flesh draeth men to drunnesse,
An to wronehede, and to golnesse,
The gost mis-deth thurch nithe an onde,
And seoththe mid murhthe of monnes honde, 1400
An 3eo[r]neth after more and more,
An lutel rehth of milce and ore,
An stizth on hey thurth modinesse,
An over-hohedh thanne lasse.
Sei me sooth, 3ef thu hit wost,
Hwether deth wurse, flesh the gost ?
Thu mi3t segge, 3ef thu wult,
That lasse is the flesches gult.
Moni man is of his flesche clene,
That is mid mode deovel i-mene ; 1410

Ne schal non mon wimman bi-grede,
 An flesches lustes hire up-breide;
 Swuch he may tellen of golnesse,
 That sunegeth wurse i modinesse.
 Bet 3if ich schulde a luve bringe
 Wif other maide, hwanne ich singe,
 Ich wolde with the maide holde,
 3if thu hit const ariht at-holde,
 Lustun, ich segge the, hwar-vore,
 Up to the toppe from the more 1420
 3ef maide luveth dernliche,
 Heo stumpeth and falth i-cundeliche;
 For thah heo sum hwile pleie,
 Heo nis nout feor ut of the weie;
 Heo mai hire guld atwende
 A rihte weie thurth chirche bende;
 An mai eft habbe to make
 Hire leofmon withute sake,
 An go to him bi daies lihte,
 That er stal to bi theostre nihte. 1430
 An 3unling not hwat swuch thing is;
 His 3unge blod hit dra3eth amis;
 An sum sot mon hit tihth thar-to,
 Mid alle than that he mai do,
 He cometh and fareth and beod and bid,
 An heo bi-stant and over-sid,
 An bi-sehth i-lome and longe,
 Hwat mai that chil thah hit mis-fonge?
 Hit nust neaver hwat hit was,
 For-thi hit thohte fondi thas, 1440

An wite i-wis hwuch beo the gome
 That of so wilde maketh tome.
 Ne mai ich for reowe lete,
 Wanne ich i-seo the tohte i-lete,
 The luve bring on the 3unglinge,
 That ich of mur3the him ne singe ;
 Ich reache heom bi mine songe,
 That swucch luve ne lest no3t longe ;
 For mi song lutle hwile i-lest,
 An luve ne deth no3t bute rest 1450
 On swuch childre and sone a-geth,
 An falth adun the hote breth.
 Ich singe mid heom one thro3e,
 Bi-ginne on heh and endi laze,
 An lete mines songes falle
 An lutle wile adun mid alle ;
 That maide wot hwanne ich swike,
 That luve is mine songes i-liche :
 For hit nis bute a lutel breth,
 That sone kumeth, and sone geth. 1460
 That child bi me hit understond,
 An his un-red to red wend ;
 An i-se3th wel bi mine songe,
 That dusi luve ne last no3t longe.
 Ah wel ich wule that thu hit wite,
 Loth me beoth wives ut-schute ;
 Ah 3if mai of me nime 3eme,
 Ich ne singe nawt hwan ich teme ;
 An wif ah lete sortes lore,
 Thah spusing bendes thuncheth sore ! 1470

Wundere me thungth wel starc and stor,
 Hu eni mon so eavar for,
 That e his heorte mizte drive,
 An o do hit to others mannes wive.

For other hit is of twam thinge,
 Ne mai that thridde noman bringe ;

Othar the laverd is wel aht,

Other aswunde and nis naht.

3ef he is wurthful and aht man,

Nele noman that wisdon can,

1480

Hure of is wive do him schame,

For he mai him adrede grame ;

An that he for-leose that ther hongeth,

That him eft thar-to nozt ne longeth.

An thah he that nozt ne adrede,

Hit is un-rizt and gret sothede,

An o mis-don one gode manne,

An his i-bedde from him spanne,

3ef hire laverd is for-wurde,

An un-orne at bedde and at borde,

1490

Hu mizte thar beo eni lue,

Wanne a swuch cheorles buc hire leth buve ?

Hu mai thar eni lue beo,

War swuch man gropeth hire theo ?

Her-bi thu mizt wel understonde,

That on his areu, that other schonde,

To stele to othres mannes bedde ;

For 3if aht man is hire bedde,

Thu mizt wene that the mis-tide,

Wanne thu list bi hire side ;

1500

An 3ef the laverd is a wercche,
 Hwuch este miztistu thar vecche?
 3if thu bi-thenchest hwo hire of-ligge,
 Thu mizt mid wlate the este bugge.
 Ich not hu mai eni freo-man
 For hire sechen after than;
 3ef he bi-weneth bi hwan he lai,
 Al mai the luve gan awai."

The hule was glad of swuche tale,
 Heo tho3te thatte nihtegale, 1510
 Thah heo wel speke atte frume,
 Hadde at then ende mis-nume;
 An seide, "Nu ich habbe i-funde,
 That maidenen beoth of thine i-munde;
 Mid heom thu holdest, and heom bi-werest,
 An over swithe thu hi herest;
 The lavedies beoth to me i-wend,
 To me heo hire mode send;
 For hit i-tit ofte and i-lome,
 That wif and were beoth un-i-some, 1520
 And ther-fore the were gulte
 That leof is over wummon to pulte,
 An speneth on thare al that he haveth,
 An suieth thare that no riht naveth,
 An haveth attom his rizte spuse,
 Wowes weste [other] lere huse,
 Wel thunne i-schud and i-ved wrothe,
 An let heo bute mete and clothe.

Wan he cometh ham eft to his wive,
Ne dar heo noȝt a word ischire ; 1530
He chid and gred swuch he beo wod,
An ne bringth heom non other god ;
Al that heo deth him is un-wille,
Al that heo speketh hit is him ille ;
An oft hwan heo noȝt ne mis-deth,
Heo haveth the fust in hire teth.
Nis nan mon that ne mai i-bringe
Wis wif amis mid swucche thinge ;
Me hire mai so ofte mis-beode,
That heo do wule hire ahene neode, 1540
La, Godd hit wot ! heo nah i-weld,
Tha heo hine makie kukeweld.
For hit i-tit lome and ofte,
That his wif is wel nesche and softe,
Of faire bleo and wel i-diht ;
Thi hit is the more un-riht
That he his luve spene on ware,
That nis wurth one of hire heare.
An swucche men beoth wel manifolde,
That wif ne kunne noht ariȝt holde ; 1550
Ne mot non mon with hire speke,
He venedh heo wule anon to-breke
Hire spusing, ȝef heo loketh,
Other with manne faire speketh,
He hire bi-luth mid keie and loke :
Thar-thurh is spusing ofte to-broke.
For ȝef heo is thar-to i-broht,
He deth that heo nadde ear i-thoht.

Dahet that to swuthe hit bi-speke,
Thah swucche wives hire awreke ! 1560
Her-of the lavedies to me meneth,
An wel sore me ahweneth ;
Wel neh min heorte wule to-chine,
Hwon ich bi-holde hire pine ;
Mid heom ich wepe swise sore,
An for heom bidde Cristis ore,
That the lavedi sone a-redde,
An hire sende betere i-bedde.
An other thing ich mai the telle,
That thu ne schald for thine felle 1570
Ondswere none thar-to finde ;
Al thi sputing schal aswinde.
Moni chapmon, and moni cniht,
Luveth and hlad his wif ariht ;
An swa deth moni bonde-man ;
That gode wif deth after than,
An serveth him to bedde and to borde,
Mid faire dede and faire worde,
An 3eorne fondeth hu heo muhe
Do thing that him beo i-du3e. 1580
The laverd into thare theode
Fareth ut on thare beire nede,
An is that gode wif un-blithe,
For hire laverdes houndsithe,
An sit and sihdh wel sore of-longed,
An hire sore an horte on-gred ;
Al for hire loverdes sake
Haveth daies kare and niztes wake ;

An swuthe longe hire is the hwile,
An ek steape hire thunth a mile, 1590
Hwanne othre slepeth hire abute,
Ich one lust thar widh wute,
An wot of hire sore mode,
An singe a niȝt for hire gode,
An mine gode song for hire thinge
Ich turne sundel to murni[n]ge;
Of hure seorhe ich bere sume,
For than ich am hire wel welcume;
Ich hire helpe hwat I mai,
For-hozeth thane rehte wai. 1600
Ah thu me havest sore i-gramed,
That min heorte is wel neh a-lamed,
That ich mai un-neathe speke;
Ah ȝet ich wule for thure reke.
Thu seist that ich am manne y-ladh,
An evereuch man is widh me wrodh,
An me mid stone and lugge threteth,
An me to-busteth and to-beteth;
An hwanne heo habeth me of-slahe,
Heo hongeth me on heore hahe, 1610
Thar ich ascheweale pie an crowe
Fron than the thar is i-sowe.
Thah hit beo soth, ich do heom god,
An for heom ich chadde mi blod;
Ich do heom god mid mine deathe,
Thar-vore the is wel un-neathe,
For thah thu ligge dead and clinge,
Thi deth nis nawt to none thinge;

Ich not neaver to hwan thu miȝt,
 For thu nart bute a wrecche wiȝt. 1620
 Ah thah mi lif me beo at-schote,
 The ȝet ich mai do gode note,
 Me mai upone smale sticke
 Me sette a wude ine the thicke,
 An swa mai mon tolli him to
 Lutle briddes and i-vo,
 An swa me mai mid me bi-ȝete
 Wel gode brede to his mete.
 Ah thu nevre mon to gode
 Lives ne deathes stal ne stode. 1630
 Ich not to hwan thu breist thi broȝ,
 Lives ne deathes ne deth hit god."

The nihtegale i-h[e]rde this,
 An hupte uppon on blowe ris,
 An herre sat than heo dude ear;
 "Hule," he seide, "beo nu wear,
 Nulle ich with the plaidi namore,
 For her the nust thi rihte lore;
 Thu ȝeilpest that thu art manne loth,
 An evereuch wiht is widh the worth; 1640
 An mid ȝulinge and mid i-grede,
 Thu wanst wel that thu art un-lede.
 Thu seist that gromes the i-fodh,
 An heie on rodde the an-hodh,
 An the to-twichet and to-schakedh,
 An summe of the schawles makedh;

Me thunch that thu for-leost that game,
 Thu 3ulpest of thire o3e schame;
 Me thunch that thu me gest an honde,
 Thu 3ulpest of thire o3ene schomme." 1650
 Tho heo hadde theos word i-cwede,
 Heo sat in one faire stude,
 An thar after hire stevene dihte,
 An song so schille and so brihte,
 That feor and ner me hit i-herde.
 Thar-vore anan to hire cherde
 Thrusche, and throstle, and wudewale,
 An fuheles bothe grete and smale;
 For than heom thuhte that heo hadde
 The houle over-come, vor than heo gradde, 1660
 An sungen alswa vale wise,
 An blisse was among the rise;
 Ri3t swa me gred the manne a-schame,
 That taveleth and for-leost that gome.

Theos hule tho heo this i-herde,
 "Havestu," heo seide, "i-banned ferde?
 An wultu, wrecche, widh me fi3te?
 Nai, nai, navestu none mi3te.
 Hwat gredeth theo that hider come?
 Me thunchth thu ledest ferd tome. 1670
 3e schule wite ar 3e fleo heonne,
 Hwuch is the strenthe of mine kunne;
 For theo the haveth bile i-hoked,
 An clivres charpe and wel i-croked,

Alle heo beoth of mine kunrede,
 An walde come, ȝif ich bede ;
 The seolfe coc, that wel can fȝte,
 He mot mid me holde mid riȝte,
 For bothe we habbeth stevene briȝte,
 An sitteth under weoluce bi niȝte. 1680
 Schille ich anutest uppen ow grede,
 Ich shal swo stronge ferde lede,
 That other proude schal aualle,
 A tort ne ȝive ich for ow alle ;
 Ne schal, ar hit beo fulliche eve,
 A wreche fether on ow bi-leave.
 Ah hit was unker voreward,
 Tho we come hider-ward,
 That we thar-to holde scholde,
 Thar riht dom us ȝive wolde. 1690
 Wultu nu breke foreward ?
 Ich wene dom the thing to hard ;
 For thu ne darst domes abide,
 Thu wult nu, wreche, fȝte and chide.
 ȝot ich ow alle wolde rede,
 Ar ihe utheste uppon ow grede,
 That other fiht-lac leteth beo,
 An ginneth rathe awei fleo.
 For, bi the clivres that ich bere !
 ȝef ȝe abideth mine here, 1700
 ȝe schule on other wise singe,
 An acursi alle fȝtinge ;
 Vor nis of ow non so kene,
 That durre abide mine onsene."

Theos hule spac wel baldeliche,
For thah heo nadde swo hwatliche
I-fare after hire here,
Heo walde neotheles 3efe answere.

The niztegale mid swucche worde,
For moni man mid speres orde, 1710
Haveth lutle strencthe, and mid his chelde,
Ah neotheles in one felde
Thurh belde worde an mid i-lete,
Deth his i-vo for arehwe swete ;
The wranne, for heo cuthe singe,
War com in thare more3eiing,
To helpe thare niztegale :
For thah heo hadde stevene smale,
Heo hadde gode thorte and schille,
An fale manne song awille ; 1720
The wranne was wel wis i-holde,
Vor the3 heo nere i-bred a wolde,
Ho was i-to3en among mankunne,
An hire wisdom brohte thenne ;
Heo mi3te speke hwar heo walde,
To-vore the king thah heo scholde.
“ Lusteth,” heo cwath, “ lateth me speke :
Hwat, wulle 3e this pes to-breke,
An do thanne swuch schame ?
3e, nis he nouthur ded ne lame, 1730
Hunke schal i-tide harm and schonde,
3ef 3e doth grith-bruche on his londe.

Lateth beo, and beoth i-some,
 An fareth riht to other dome,
 An lateth dom this plaid to-breke,
 Al swo hit was erur bi-speke."

"Ich, an wel," cwadh the niztegale ;

"Ah, wranne, nawt for thire tale,
 Ah do for mire lahfulnesse :

Ich nolde that un-rihtfulnesse 1740

Me at then ende over-kome ;

Ich nam of-drad of none dome.

Bi-hote ich habbe, soth hit is,

That maister Nichole, that is wis,

Bi-tuxen us deme schulde ;

An 3ef ich wene that he wule ;

Ah war mihte we hine finde ?"

The wranne sat in ore linde,

"Hwat, nu3te 3e," cwath heo, "his hom ?

He wuneth at Porteshom, 1750

At one tune ine Dorsete,

Bi thare see in ore ut-lete ;

Thar he demeth manie ri3te dom,

An diht and writ mani wisdom,

An thurh his muthe and thurh his honde

Hit is the betere into Scotlonde.

To seche hine is lihtlich thing,

He naveth bute one woning :

That his bischopen muchel schame ;

An alle than that of his nome 1760

Habbeth i-hert and of his dede,
Hwi nulleth hi nimen heom to rede,
That he were mid heom i-lome
For teche heom of his wisdom,
An 3ive him rente a vale stude,
That he mi3te heom i-lome be mide?"

"Certes," cwath the hule, "that is sodh :
Theos riche men wel muche mis-dodh,
That leteth thane gode mon,
That of so feole thinge con,
An 3iveth rente wel mis-liche,
An of him leteth wel lihtliche ;
Widh heore cunne heo beoth mildre,
An 3eveth rente litle childre,
Swo heore wit hi demth adwole,
That ever abid maister Nichole.
Ah ute we thah to him fare,
For thar is unker dom al 3are."

1770

"Do we," the ni3tegeale seide :
"Ah wa schal unker speche rede,
An telle to-vore unker deme?"

1780

"Thar-of ich schal the wel i-cweme,"
Cwath the houle, "for al ende of orde,
Telle ich con word after worde ;
An 3ef the thincth that ich mis-rempe,
Thu stond a3ein and dome crempe."

Mid thisse worde forth hi ferden,
Al bute here and bute verde,
To Portesham that heo bi-come;
Ah hu heo spedde of heore dome 1790
Ne chan ich eu namore telle;
Her nis namore of this spelle.

RELIGIOUS SONGS.

I.

Non mai longe lives thene,
Ac ofte him liedh the wrench :
Feir weder turnedh ofte into reine,
An wunderliche hit makedh his blench.
Thar-vore, mon, thu the bi-thench,
Al schal falewi thi grene.
Weilawei ! nis kin ne quene
That ne schal drincke of deathes drench.
Mon, er thu falle of thi bench,
Thine sunne thu aquench.

Nis non so strong ne sterch ne kene,
That mai ago deathes wither blench :
zung and olde, brihet and schene,
Alle he riveth in one strench.
Fox and ferlich is his wrenh,
Ne mai no mon thar-to zeines,
Weilawei ! threting ne bene,
Mede, liste, ne leches drench.
Mon, let sunne and lustes thine ;
Wel thu do and wel thu thench.

Do bi Salemones rede,
 Mon, and thenne thu schald wel do !
 Do ase he tahte and seide,
 That thin endinge the bringeth to ;
 Thenne ne schal thu never mis-do.
 Ac fore thu mizt the adrede,
 Weilawei ! shuc thenedh to lede
 Long lif, and blisse under-fo.
 Ac deth luteth in his scho,
 Him stillich to for-do.

Mon, hwi nultu the bi-cnowe ?
 Mon, hwi nultu the bi-seo ?
 Of fole fulthe thu art i-sowe,
 Wormes fode thu schald beo.
 Her navestu blisse daies threo.
 Ac thi lif al thu last ine wowe ;
 Weilawei ! deth the schal adun throwe,
 Ther thu wenest hezest to steo.
 Ine dedh schal thi lif endi,
 And ine wop al thi gleo.

World and weole the bi-swikedh,
 I-wis heo beodh thin i-fo.
 3ef the world widh weole the slikedh,
 That is for to do the wo.
 Thare-fore let lust over-go ;
 And eftzones hit the likedh,
 Weilawei ! sore he him bi-swikedh,
 That for on stunde other two

Wurcheth him pine evermo :
Mon, ne do thu nowt swo.

II.

On hire is al mi lif i-long,
Of hwam ich wule singe,
And herien hire, that among
Heo gon us bote bringe,
Of helle pine that is strong
Heo brohte us blisse that is long,
Al thurh hire childeringe.
Ich bidde hire one mi song,
Heo 3eove us god endinge,
Thah we don wrong.

Thu art hele and lif and light,
And helpest al mon-kunne ;
Thu us havest ful wel i-di3t,
Thu 3eve us weole and wunne ;
Thu brohtest dai, and Eve ni3t ;
Heo bro3te woht, thu bro3test ri3t,
Thu almesse, and heo sunne.
Bi-sih to me, lavedi bri3t,
Hwenne ich schal wende heonne,
So wel thu miht.

Al this world schal ago,
Widh seorhe and widh sore ;

And al this lif we schule for-go,
Ne of-thunche hit us so sore.
This world nis butent ure i-fo ;
Thar-fore ich thenche hirne at-go,
And do bi Godes lore.
This lives blisse nis wurdh a slo :
Ich bidde, God, thin ore,
Nu and evere mo.

To longe ich habbe sot i-beo :
Wel sore ich me adrede ;
I-luvéd ich habbe gomen and gleo,
And prude and feire wede.
Al that is dweole wel i-seo,
Thar-fore ich thenche sunne fleo
And alle mine sot dede.
Ich bidde hire to me bi-seo,
And helpe me and rede,
That is so freo.

Agult ich habbe, weilawei !
Sunful ich am an wrecche.
Awrec the nu on me, levedi,
Er deth me honne fecche.
Do nim the wreche, ich am redi,
Other let me liven and amendi,
That no feond me ne drecche.
For mine sunnes ich am sori,
Of this world ich ne recche ;
Levedi, merci. AMEN.

III.

HWENNE so wil wit ofer-stiedh,
Thenne is wil and wit for-lore ;
Hwenne so wil his hete hiedh,
Ther nis nowiht wit i-core.
Ofte wil to seorȝe siedh,
Bute ȝif wit him wite to-fore.
Ac hwenne so wil to wene wriedh,
The o fo of wisdom is to-tore.

IV.

HWENNE ich thenche of domes-dai,
ful sore ime adrede.
Ther schal after his
euch mon fongen mede.
Ich habbe Crist agult
widh thoȝtes and widh dede.
Laverd Crist, Godes sone,
wat is me to rede ?

That fur schal kumen in this world
one one sune nizte,
For-bernen al this middel-erd,
so Crist hit wolde dizte ;
Bothe in the water and in that lond
the flures that beoth brihte.
I-herd beo thu, laverd,
so muchel beth thine mihte !

The engles in the dai-red
blewedh heore beme :
Thenne cometh ure laverd Crist,
his domes for to deme.
He helpedh hit noht thenne
to wepen ne to remen,
That havedh lutel i-don,
that Godd were i-cweme.

From that Adam was i-schapen
to comen domes-dai,
Moni of thisse riche
that wereden foh and grei,
An rideth uppe stede
and uppen palefrai,
Heo schulen atte dome
suggen weilawei !

Ne schulen heo nowdher fizte
mid schelde ne mid spere,
Mid helme ne mid brunie,
ne mid non other gere ;
Ne schal ther nomon other
mid wise wordes were,
Bute heore almes-dede
heore ernde schal bere.

Heo schulen i-seon the lavedi
that Jhesu Crist of-kende ;
Bi-tweonen hire armes
sweteliche he wende.

The wile that we mihte,
to litte we hire sende ;
That makede the cwed,
so fule he us blende.

Heo schul i-seon thene king
that al this world wrohte,
An uppon the rode
mid stronge pine abohte.
Adam and his ofspring
in helle he heom sohte,
To bidden his milce
to late we beod bi-thohte.

Ther stondeth the riȝtwise
on his riȝt honde,
An the sunfule
so ateliche heo stondeth,
Mid heore sunnen i-writen,
that is so muchel schonde,
Ther hit schulen alle i-seon
al that her weren a londe.

Widh the riȝtwise
he speketh wordes swete :
Cometh her, mine freond,
oure sunnes for to lete,
In mine fader boure
ow is i-maked sete,
Ther ow schulen engles
ful sweteliche grete.

Widh the sunfule,
al so 3e mahen i-here :
Godh, awariede gostes,
feondes i-fere,
Into berninde fur,
of blisse 3e beoth skere ;
For 3e owre sunnen
of thisse worlde bere.

Bidde we ure lavedi,
swetest alre thinge,
That heo ure erende beore
to then hevon-kinge ;
For his holi nome,
and for hire herendinge,
That heo ure sawle
to heaven-rige bringe.

v.

I-heredh of one thinge
that 3e ohen of thenche,
3e that weriedh riche schrud,
and sittedh on oure benche.
Thah me kneoli ou bi-vore,
and mid win schenche,
From the dreorie deadh
ne mai nomon at-blenche.

3e that sittet i-schrud
 widh skarlet and widh palle,
Wel sothe tithinge
 ich ou wile telle.
The feond thenchedh i-wis
 the sawle for to cwelle,
Ase we hit findeth i-writen
 in the Goddspelle.

Ah of one thinge,
 we schule nime gome,
That we weren povre
 tha we hider come.
We hit heredh i-wis
 swithe ofte and i-lome,
The sawle and the licome
 selde heo beoth i-some.

Hwenne the child bid i-boren,
 and on eorthe i-falle,
Nolde ich 3even enne peni
 for his weden alle :
Ah seodhdhen moni mon
 bi-3et bores and halle ;
For-hwi the wrecche sawle
 schal into pine valle.

Thenche we on the laste dai
 that we schule heonne fare,
Ut of thisse worlde,
 widh pine and widh kare,

Al so we hider comen
naked and bare,
And of ure sunnen
3even ondsweare.

Nabbe no mon so muchel,
al hit wolle agon,
His lond and his hus,
and his hom ;
The sorie soule
maketh hire mon :
I-wis ne mai at-blenche
ure neaver non.

Thenne the latemest dai
deth havedh i-brouhit,
Bi-nimedh ure speche,
ure siht and ure thoht,
And in euche lime
deth us hafdh wuth-soht,
Thenne beodh ure blisse
al i-turnd to noht.

Ne mizte no tunge tellen,
that ever wes i-boren,
The stronge pine of helle,
thah he hedde i-sworen,
Er the sawle and the bodi
a two beon to-drehen,
Bute Crist that lesede his folc
that ther wes for-loren.

Anon so the sawle
 bidh i-faren ut,
Me nimedh the licome
 and preonedh in a clut,
That wes so modi and so strong,
 and so swithe prud,
And wes i-woned to werien
 moni a feir schrud.

Nu lidh the clei clot
 al so the ston.
And his freondes strivedh
 to gripen his i-won ;
The sorie sowle
 makedh hire mon,
Of alle hire errure freond
 nu nafdh heo non.

“ Henne,” saidh the sawle
 widh sorie chere ;
“ Awai ! thu wrecche fole bali,
 nu thu list on bere,
Ich schal habben for the
 fendes to i-fere.
Awai ! that thu evere
 to monne i-schape were !

Ne schaltu neaver sitten
 on bolstre ne on benche,
Ne never in none halle,
 ther me vin schenchedh.

For thine fule sunnen,
and for thin um wrenche,
Hi schal, wrecche sawle,
to ateliche stenze.

Hwer beodh alle thine frond,
that faire the bi-hete,
And feire the i-gretten
bi weies and bi strete?
Nu heo wolledh, wrecche,
alle the for-lete;
Nolden he hore stonkes
non nu the i-mete.

Hwer beodh thine dihsches,
midd thine swete sonde?
Hwer beoth thine nappes,
that the glideth to honde?
Hwer is thi bred and thin ale?
thi tunne and thine stonde?
Nu thu schalt in the putte
wunie wid the wonde.

Of me thu havedest miȝte
to don al thine wille;
Ever thu were abuten
us bo for to spille.
Nu thu schalt, wrecche,
liggen ful stille;
And ich schal thine gultes
abuggen ful ille.

Hwi noldest thu mid Crist
 maken us i-sahte,
Masse leten singe
 of that he the bi-tahte?
Ever thu were abuten
 to echen thin ahte:
For-thi we beodh an ende
 bothe bi-pahte.

Thelde wole me for the
 masse lete singe,
Other in holi chirche
 don ei offringe.
Me wule for thin ahte
 make strivinge,
And pute the widh-uten
 of alle thine thinge.

Li, awariede bali,
 that neaver thu ne arise;
Hwenne ich thenche the uppon,
 ful sore me mai agrise.
For ich schal bernen in fur,
 and chiverin in ise,
And ever beon in pinen
 a feole kunne wise.

Nu schal thin halle
 mid spade beon i-wrozt;
And thu schald ther-inne,
 wrecche, beon i-brozt.

Nu schulen thine weden
alle beon i-soȝt,
Me wule swopen thin hus,
and ut mid the swost.

Thi bur is sone i-buld,
that thu schald wunien inne ;
The rof the firste
schal legge o thine chinne.
Nu the sculen wormes
wunien widhinne ;
Ne mai me heom ut driven
widh nones kunnes ginne.

Nu is afered of the
thi mei and thi mowe ;
Alle heo weredh the weden
that er weren thin owe,
And thu schald nu in eorthe
liggen ful lohe :
Wai ! hwi noldestu er
of thisse beon i-cnowe.

Nu schal for-rotien
thine tedh and thi tunge,
Thi mahe and thi milte,
thi livre and thi lunge,
And thi throte bolle
that thu mide sunge ;
And thu schal in the putte
faste beon i-thrunge.

Hwer bedh thine theines
that the leove were?
Of alle thine riche weden
nu thu ard al skere.
Beo thu in the putte
wormes i-fere,
Hit bidh sone of the
al so thu neaver nere.

Al that ich hatede
hit thuzte the ful god,
That made the qued ther
that the bi-stod.
Hevedest thu thi wille,
thu were al wod;
And ich am wrecche sawle
ful sori mod.

Nu thu schald bi-leven,
and icht mot fare nede:
For alle thine gultes
fongon ischal mede,
That is hunger and chele,
and fur-berninge glede,
And so me wule Sathanas
ful ateliche brede.

Ich am sori i-noh
bi dai and bi niht,
Ischal theostre stude
ther neaver ne kumedh liht,

That ischal i-mete
moni a ful wiht ;
Ne schal ich neaver i-seo
Crist that is so briht.

In ful a bitter badh
bathien ich schal naked,
Of pisch and of brimeston
wallinde is i-maked.
Ther is Sathanas the cwed
redi widh his rake,
And swo he me wule for-swolehen
the fur-berninde drake.

Thah al the fur in this world
to-gedere were i-broht,
Azeines thare hete
nere hit al noht.
Wo is him alive
that ther-inne is i-broht !
Awai ! thas ilke pine
thu havest me bi-soht.

Hwo i-sehe thene cwed,
hu lodlich he beo,
Hornes on his heaved,
hornes on his cneo,
Nis no thing alive
that so ateliche beo.
Wo is heom ine helle
that hine schule i-seo !

He 3eoneth mid his muthe,
and stareth mid his e3e;
Of his neose thurles
cumedh the rede leie;
The fur springeth him ut
of everuche breye;
He moste deie for care,
hwase hine i-se3e.

Al so beodh his e3e puttes
ase a bruthen led;
The fur springeth him of
wunderliche red.
Ne mai no tunge telle
hu lodlich is the qued.
Hwase lokede him on,
for care he mizte beo dead.

Holde we us clene
ut of hordom;
Masse leten singen,
and almes-dede don,
And widh hali chirche
maken us i-som:
Thenne mohe we cwemen
Crist at the dom.

The king that al this world scheop
thurh his holi mizte,
Bi-wite ure sawle
from than fule wizte

And lete us hatie the woh
and luvie the rizte,
And bringe ure sawle
to heoveriche lizte ! AMEN.

VI.

Hwan thu sixst on leode
King that is wilful,
And domes-mon niminde,
Proest that is wilde,
Bischop slou,
Old mon lechur,
3unch mon liezer,
Wimmon schomeles,
Child un-theand,
Thral un-buxsum,
Atheling britheling,
Lond widhute laze,
Al so seide Bede,
Wo there theode !

VII.

HARKNIED, alle gode men,
and stille sitteth adun,
And ich eou wule tellen
a lutel sermum.

Wel we witen alle,
thag ich eou noȝt ne telle,
Hu Adam ure vorme-fader
adun vel into helle ;
Schomeliche he vor-lef
the blisse that he hedde,
To ȝivernesse and prude
none neode he nedde ;
He nom then appel of the tre,
that him for-bode was ;
So reusful dede
i-don never non nas.
He made him into helle falle,
And efter him his children alle.
Ther he was fort ure drihte
Hine bohte mid his mihte :
He hine alesede mid his blode,
That he scedde upon the rode ;
To dethe he ȝef him for us alle,
Tho we weren so stronge at-falle.
Alle bac-biteres
wendet to helle,
Robberes and reveres,
and the mon-quelle ;
Lechurs and horlinges
thider sculen wende,
And ther heo sculen wunien
evere buten ende.
Alle theos false chepmen,
the feond heom wule habbe,

Bachares and brueres,
for alle men heo gabbe ;
Loze heo holdet hore galun,
mid berme heo hine fulleth,
And ever of the purse
that selver heo tulleth.
Bothe heo maketh feble
heore bred and heore ale ;
Habben heo that selver,
ne tellet heo never tale.
Godemen, for godes lue,
bi-leveth suche sunne ;
For atten ende hit bi-nimeth
heveriche wunne.
Alle prestes wifes,
ich wot heo beoth for-lore ;
Thes persones, ich wene,
ne beoth heo noȝt for-bore,
Ne theos prude ȝunge-men
that luvieth Malekin,
And theos prude maiden
that luvieth Janekin.
At chirche and at cheping
hwanne heo to-gadere come,
Heo runeth to-gaderes
and speketh of derne lue ;
Hwenne heo to chirche cometh,
to the haliday,
Everuch wile his leof i-seon,

ther 3eth he may.
Heo bi-holdeth Wadekin
mid swithe gled eye,
Atom his hire pater noster
bi-loken in hire teye.
Masses and matines
ne kepeth heo nouht.
Robin wule Gilot
leden to then ale,
And sitten ther to-gederes,
and tellen heore tale;
He mai quiten hire ale,
and so then do that gome,
An eve to go mid him
ne thuchet hire no schome.
Hire sire and hire dame
threteth hire to bete;
Nule heo for-go Robin
for al heore threte:
Ever heo wile hire schere,
ne com hire nomon neh,
Fort that hire wombe
up a-rise an heh.
Godemen, for Godes luve,
bi-leveth eoure sunne;
For aten ende hit bi-nimeth
heveriche wunne.
Bidde we seinte Marie,
for hire milde mode,

For the teres that heo wep,
 for hire sone blode,
 Al so wis so he god is,
 for hire erndinge,
 To the blisse of hevene,
 he us alle bringe. **AMEN.**

FINIS.

For the teres that heo wep,
 for hire sone blode,
 Al so wis so he god is,
 for hire erndinge,
 To the blisse of hevene,
 he us alle bringe. **AMEN.**

FINIS.

Wright, Thomas, 1810-1877 [Herausgeber]

The owl and the nightingale an early English poem attributed to Nicholas de Guildford, with some shorter poems from the same manuscripts

London 1843

P.o.angl. 276 k-11

urn:nbn:de:bvb:12-bsb10748134-5